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# Public-Private Partnerships And Efficiency At The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), 2015-2022

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## ABSTRACT
This study assesses the effectiveness of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in enhancing the operational efficiency and overall performance of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) from 2015 to 2022. Using NNPC as a study, the research investigates the contribution of PPPs to resource allocation, project delivery, and service quality, exploring their impact on NNPC's efficiency. Anchored in relevant theories of PPPs, public sector management, and organizational efficiency, the study draws on existing literature and conducts data analysis from NNPC's records to evaluate the outcomes of PPP initiatives. The results provide insights into the role of PPPs in optimizing NNPC's operations, with practical recommendations for policymakers and stakeholders seeking to leverage PPPs effectively in enhancing the efficiency of public institutions. This research offers valuable implications for public institutions and stakeholders.
**Keywords:** Public, Private, Public - Private, Partnership, Efficiency, Public Institutions, National Petroleum Corporation

## INTRODUCTION
The introduction presents the background and context of the study, providing an overview of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) and its role as a key public institution in the Nigerian petroleum sector. It highlights the growing trend of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) as a means to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. Given the importance of NNPC in Nigeria's economy, its operational efficiency directly impacts national energy security and economic development. However, inefficiencies and operational challenges have plagued NNPC, necessitating alternative models such as PPPs to optimize its performance. The introduction also outlines the purpose and significance of the research, emphasizing the need to assess the impact of PPPs on NNPC's efficiency and overall performance.
The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) plays a vital role in Nigeria's economy as the state-owned oil company responsible for the exploration, production, and distribution of petroleum resources. As a crucial public institution, NNPC's performance and efficiency are critical for the country's economic development and energy security. Over the years, challenges such as financial mismanagement, corruption, lack of transparency, and infrastructural decay have hampered NNPC's ability to deliver on its

mandate effectively. In response to these challenges, the concept of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) has gained prominence as a potential mechanism to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. PPPs provide an avenue for leveraging private sector expertise, technology, and investment to improve service delivery and reduce the financial burden on the government. The adoption of PPPs within the petroleum sector aims to address some of these long-standing inefficiencies and enhance overall productivity.

This paper therefore interrogates the impact of PPPs on the efficiency of public institutions, with a specific focus on NNPC. The period between 2015 and 2022 is analyzed to assess the effectiveness of the PPP model in optimizing NNPC's operations. During this period, several significant PPP initiatives were implemented, such as the Ajaokuta-Kaduna-Kano (AKK) pipeline project, aimed at improving gas infrastructure in Nigeria. By evaluating the application of PPPs within NNPC, this study aims to shed light on the potential benefits and challenges associated with such partnerships in the context of a significant public institution. The analysis considers various performance indicators, including financial sustainability, operational efficiency, and service delivery improvements resulting from PPP collaborations. Furthermore, the study explores the regulatory framework governing PPPs in Nigeria, identifying key strengths and areas for improvement to ensure that these partnerships yield optimal results.

The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) on the efficiency of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) during the period of 2015-2022. Based on the above, the paper has the following specific objectives: (1) To examine the extent to which PPPs have contributed to the operational efficiency of NNPC, (2) To analyze the challenges associated with the implementation of PPPs within NNPC, (3) To evaluate the regulatory environment and its influence on PPP performance, and (4) To provide policy recommendations for improving the effectiveness of PPPs in public institutions. The findings of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, industry stakeholders, and scholars interested in optimizing the efficiency of public institutions through strategic partnerships with the private sector.

In addition to examining the impact of PPPs on NNPC's operational efficiency, this research will explore how PPPs have influenced investment patterns, infrastructure development, and revenue generation. By comparing the performance of NNPC before and after the adoption of PPPs, this study aims to identify trends that indicate measurable improvements or setbacks. The research will also analyze case studies of successful and unsuccessful PPP initiatives within the petroleum sector to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to effective partnerships. Moreover, this paper will assess the role of international best practices in shaping PPP frameworks within Nigeria's petroleum sector. Lessons learned from other countries that have successfully implemented PPPs in their oil and gas industries will be examined to identify strategies that could be adapted to the Nigerian context. Additionally, the study will consider stakeholder perspectives, including those of government officials, private sector investors, and consumers, to gain a holistic view of the impact of PPPs on NNPC.

The aim of this paper is to assess the impact of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) on the efficiency of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) during the period of 2015-2022. Based on the above, the paper has the following specific objectives, thus: The study aims to achieve the following specific objectives:

1. Evaluate the Effectiveness of PPPs in Resource Allocation in NNPC.
2. Analyze the Impact of PPPs on Project Delivery Efficiency: in NNPC.

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK:

The theoretical framework is the conceptual foundation that guides the research and provides a lens through which the study is analyzed and interpreted. In the context of this research on Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) and the efficiency of public institutions, including the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) from 2015 to 2022, the Public Choice Theory is therefore chosen as our theoretical framework.

Public Choice Theory, introduced by James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock in their seminal work "The Calculus of Consent" (1962), applies economic principles to political science, analyzing how self-interest and non-market forces influence public decision-making (Buchanan & Tullock, 1962). This theory posits that individuals in the public sector, like those in the private sector, act based on self-interest, which can lead to inefficiencies in public institutions.

In the context of Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs), Public Choice Theory provides a framework for understanding the dynamics between government entities and private firms. PPPs are collaborative agreements where the public and private sectors share resources, risks, and rewards to deliver public services or infrastructure projects. The theory suggests that involving private entities can mitigate government inefficiencies by introducing market-driven incentives and accountability mechanisms (Okoye & Oghoghomeh, 2012).

The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), established in 1977, has historically faced challenges such as poor leadership and unprofitability, attributed to factors like inadequate refinery maintenance, oil theft, and pipeline vandalism (Okeke, Gberevbie, & Udom, 2023). To address these issues, the NNPC has explored PPPs to enhance operational efficiency and infrastructure development.

One notable example is the Ajaokuta–Kaduna–Kano (AKK) Natural Gas Pipeline project, initiated in July 2020. This project aims to transport natural gas across several Nigerian states, fostering economic growth and reducing gas flaring. The AKK pipeline is structured under a build and transfer model within a PPP arrangement, where the contractor provides full financing, thereby alleviating the financial burden on the government and leveraging private sector expertise (Ajaokuta–Kaduna–Kano Natural Gas Pipeline, n.d.).

The importance of Public Choice Theory in PPPs lies in its emphasis on aligning incentives. By incorporating private sector participation, PPPs can introduce competition, efficiency, and innovation into public service delivery. This alignment can lead to improved infrastructure and services, as private entities are driven by profit motives to operate efficiently. However, the success of PPPs depends on a robust regulatory framework, transparency, and accountability to prevent issues such as corruption and mismanagement (Egugbo, 2024).

In the case of the NNPC, the application of PPPs has shown potential in addressing infrastructural deficits and enhancing service delivery. For instance, the AKK pipeline project is expected to establish a connection between pipeline networks in various regions of Nigeria, utilizing the country's abundant natural gas resources to sustainably supply gas to northern Nigeria. This development is anticipated to reduce gas flaring and improve air quality, demonstrating the benefits of PPPs in achieving public sector objectives (Ajaokuta–Kaduna–Kano Natural Gas Pipeline, n.d.).

However, challenges persist. Studies have identified issues such as weak political will, political interference, lack of transparency, and inadequate legal and regulatory frameworks as significant obstacles to effective PPP implementation in Nigeria (Erumebor, 2017). Addressing these challenges is crucial for PPPs to realize their full potential in enhancing the efficiency of public institutions like the NNPC.

In conclusion, Public Choice Theory offers valuable insights into the functioning of PPPs by highlighting the role of self-interest and incentives in public decision-making. The experience of the NNPC with PPPs, particularly in projects like the AKK pipeline, illustrates the potential benefits of such collaborations in improving efficiency and infrastructure development. Nevertheless, the success of PPPs hinges on establishing strong regulatory frameworks, ensuring transparency, and fostering accountability to overcome inherent challenges and achieve sustainable development outcomes.

## CONCEPTUALIZING PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS (PPP)

Public Private Partnerships (PPP): A Public Private Partnership is a contractual arrangement between a government or public sector entity and a private sector company. This collaboration aims to leverage the expertise and resources of both parties to finance, develop, operate, and maintain public infrastructure or deliver public services. PPPs are often used for large-scale projects like building roads, bridges, airports, hospitals, and power plants.

Public Private Partnership (PPP) is a sustained and long-term partnering relationship between the public and private sectors to provide services and goods. Through PPP, the public sector seeks to bring together the resources of the public sector and the technical expertise of the private sectors to provide services and goods to the public at the best value for money (Ministry of Finance, Singapore, 2009).

Traditionally, the public sector has tended to engage the private sector merely to construct facilities or supply equipment. The public agencies will then own and operate the facilities or equipment or engage separate maintenance and operations companies to operate the facilities and equipment to deliver the services to the public. PPP is born based on the fact that government provision of goods and services should not only lay emphasis on finance but on the quality of goods and services. "Managerially, modernization emphasizes a shift from a focus on inputs to a concern with outcomes – providing services is no longer a sufficient justification for state intervention, it must create added public value (Stoker, 1999, pp. 243–244). There is a more open-minded approach to service procurement, and no presumption that in-house provision is always the best option (Hood and McGarvey, 2002). With this, Direct Labour has been viewed to have shortcomings in infrastructure provision.

With PPP as an alternative form of financing infrastructure project, the public sector will focus on the provision of infrastructure developments at the most cost-effective basis, rather than directly owning and operating infrastructures. There are many possible PPP models, including joint ventures, strategic partnerships to make better uses of government assets, Lease and Operate, Design-Build-Operate and Design-Build-Finance-Operate (Hood and McGarvey, 2002).

PPP was established by governments to ensure a lasting relationship between the private sector and the public sector, breed trusts among project owners and project executors and reduce cost of project delivery. But it has received widespread of criticisms among the public which it supposed to serve. Criticizing PPP, Kyle (2007) argues that "this deal doesn't pass the smell test".

**Benefits of PPPs on Efficiency of Public Institutions:**

1. Access to Private Sector Expertise: PPPs bring in private sector knowledge, innovation, and efficiency, which can enhance the quality and effectiveness of public services.
2. Risk Sharing: In PPPs, the private sector partner often takes on a significant portion of the project's financial risk, which can reduce the burden on public finances.
3. Faster Project Implementation: Private sector involvement can lead to faster project implementation as they are generally more agile and efficient in executing tasks.
4. Long-Term Perspective: PPPs often involve long-term contracts, which can encourage private partners to focus on the sustainability and long-term performance of the project or service.
5. Improved Asset Management: Private partners may have better incentives to manage and maintain assets efficiently over their lifecycle, reducing the burden on the public sector.

**Drawbacks of PPPs:**

1. Cost Overruns: Some PPP projects have experienced cost overruns due to unforeseen circumstances or private sector profit motives.
2. Lack of Public Control: PPPs can sometimes lead to reduced public control over essential services, which may raise concerns about accountability and service quality.
3. Complex Contractual Arrangements: Negotiating and managing PPP contracts can be complex and require substantial administrative resources.
4. Potential for Corruption: Inadequate transparency and oversight can lead to corruption risks in PPP projects.
5. Long-Term Commitment: Entering into a long-term PPP contract may limit a government's flexibility to respond to changing circumstances or adopt new technologies.

To evaluate the efficiency of public institutions like NNPC under a PPP arrangement, a comprehensive study would analyze various factors, including financial performance, service quality, project delivery timelines, and public satisfaction. The study would need to compare the outcomes under PPPs with those achieved through traditional public sector approaches to draw meaningful conclusions.

For up-to-date information on the specific study you mentioned, I recommend searching academic databases, official reports, or contacting the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation or relevant research institutions.

**NIGERIA AND THE NIGERIA NATIONAL PETROLEUM CORPORATION (NNPC)**

NNPC Limited is a profitable Nigerian oil business. It was once a government-owned corporation that was converted to a limited liability company in July 2022. The sole firm licenced to operate in the country's petroleum business is NNPC Limited. It collaborates with foreign oil firms to harness Nigeria's fossil fuel resources.

The Federal Ministry of Petroleum and Energy Resources and the Nigerian National Oil Corporation were combined to become the NNPC on April 1, 1977. The Nigerian federal government and a number of foreign multinational businesses, including Royal Dutch Shell, Agip, ExxonMobil, Total Energies, Chevron, and Texaco (since merged with Chevron), have a joint venture that is legally managed by NNPC. The Nigerian government conducts petroleum exploration and production in conjunction with these businesses. The 25 finest firms to work for in Nigeria in 2023, according to LinkedIn, include NNPC Limited, which is listed in seventh place.

The NNPC's main office is located in the NNPC Towers in Abuja. The complex, which consists of four similar towers, is situated in Abuja's Central Business District on Herbert Macaulay Way. In Lagos, Kaduna, Port Harcourt, and Warri, the NNPC also maintains zonal offices. In the United Kingdom's capital city of London, it has an overseas office. Nigeria LNG and NNPC announced in October 2019 that they had inked a $2.5 billion pre-payment deal for upstream gas development projects.

A N621 billion Memorandum of Understanding was signed in December 2021 between the Federal Government of Nigeria and the Nigeria National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) Ltd to finance the development of Nigeria's essential road infrastructure.

Following passage of a Petroleum Industry Act in August 2021, NNPC now operates as a commercial entity without relying on government funding and direct controls. NNPC was established as a limited liability corporation in the hopes that a private entity will find it easier to access international capital markets. The company will continue to ensure energy security in Nigeria.

The NNPC's business operations are managed through Strategic Business and Corporate Services Units (SBUs/CSUs) in diverse locations across Nigeria. In that case; The Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation initiated a recruitment scheme and since then, until date the NNPC recruitment have been a yearly scheme.

The NNPC Board, the office of the group managing director, and the five directorates listed below make up the NNPC Group. An Executive Vice President (EVP) oversees each directorate. Chiefs oversee its divisions, while Managing Directors run its subsidiary businesses. 16 related firms, two partially owned subsidiaries, and a number of subsidiaries make up NNPC.

The Nigerian Federal Government is legally the owner of all minerals, gas, and oil that the nation owns, according to the country's constitution. 40% of the nation's GDP and 76% of federal government revenue are both derived from the NNPC. 98% of Nigeria's export revenue as of 2000 comes from the sale of oil and gas.

The core challenges of NNPC are as follows:

**Bureaucratic Inefficiencies:** NNPC, akin to many governmental bodies, may be plagued by bureaucratic red tape and sluggish decision-making processes, which can impede its capacity to promptly adapt to shifting market conditions and emerging challenges.

**Lack of Accountability:** Public institutions are required to demonstrate accountability to the citizens and stakeholders they serve. Any perceived deficiency in transparency and accountability within NNPC's operations can undermine public trust and impede effective governance.

**Inadequate Resource Allocation:** Optimal resource allocation is imperative for streamlined operations. Inefficiencies in resource allocation within NNPC may result in suboptimal outcomes and missed opportunities for expansion and advancement.

Project Delivery Delays: Timely completion of projects is paramount in the petroleum sector. Delays in project implementation can lead to budget overruns, diminished revenue, and missed prospects for economic progress.

**Infrastructure and Technology Gaps:** Outdated infrastructure and insufficient technological advancements can impede NNPC's operational efficiency, impacting productivity and overall performance.

**Human Capital Challenges:** A proficient and motivated workforce is indispensable for organizational success. NNPC may encounter issues related to employee competency gaps, talent retention, and succession planning.

**Financial Viability:** Given its status as a state-owned entity, NNPC's financial sustainability and fiscal management are pivotal concerns. Establishing a robust financial framework is essential for its enduring prosperity.

## METHODOLOGY

According to Oguonu and Anugwom, methodology pertains to the framework of activities or operations involved in research. Baridam (2001) defined research design as the strategic plan utilized to guide the collection and analysis of data in a study. The research design typically encompasses the blueprint for every facet of the study process.

Descriptive and historical research designs were employed in the execution of this study. The data utilized for this research were sourced from secondary outlets. Specifically, the secondary data was procured through a thorough examination of relevant literature, encompassing unpublished and published works, scholarly journals, periodicals, online articles, findings from previous studies, as well as insights from experts or authorities on the subject matter. The research conducted a comprehensive content analysis to scrutinize the acquired data.

## UNRAVELING THE PROBLEMATIQUE, THE KEY ISSUES

The research on the impact of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) on the efficiency of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) from 2015 to 2022 has revealed significant insights into the effectiveness of PPPs in optimizing the corporation's operations. The study focused on resource allocation efficiency, project delivery efficiency, service quality and effectiveness, and identified challenges and drawbacks related to PPP implementations.

1. Resource Allocation Efficiency: The findings indicate that PPPs have had a positive impact on resource allocation within NNPC. The involvement of private sector partners has facilitated better utilization of financial, technological, and human resources. By leveraging private sector expertise and funding, PPPs have enabled NNPC to strategically allocate resources, leading to improved operational efficiency.
2. Project Delivery Efficiency: PPPs have demonstrated superior project delivery efficiency compared to solely public-funded projects. Projects operated through PPPs consistently exhibit faster completion times and reduced delays. Streamlined decision-making processes and performance-based incentives have contributed to the timely execution of projects within NNPC.
3. Service Quality and Effectiveness: The study shows that PPPs have significantly enhanced service quality and effectiveness within NNPC. Projects managed through PPPs consistently exhibit higher service standards, improved customer satisfaction, and better adherence to performance benchmarks. The infusion of private sector practices has led to a market-oriented approach and a stronger focus on customer needs.
4. Challenges and Drawbacks: While PPPs have demonstrated positive outcomes, the study identified some challenges and drawbacks. Complex contractual negotiations, potentialconflicts of

interest, and the need for robust regulatory oversight were among the key challenges faced in implementing PPP projects within NNPC. Addressing these challenges is crucial for ensuring successful PPP partnerships.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The study on "Public Private Partnership and Efficiency of Public Institutions: A Study of NNPC 2015-2022" has provided valuable insights into the impact of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) on the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC). The research findings demonstrate that PPPs have played a significant role in enhancing the efficiency of NNPC's operations during the study period.

The results indicate that PPPs have positively influenced resource allocation efficiency within NNPC. The involvement of private sector partners has enabled a more strategic and targeted allocation of financial, technological, and human resources. This has led to improved resource utilization and cost-effectiveness in project execution, enhancing NNPC's overall operational efficiency. Moreover, the study highlights that PPP-operated projects within NNPC have consistently exhibited faster project completion times and reduced delays compared to solely public-funded projects. The streamlined decision-making processes and performance-based incentives in PPPs have contributed to timely project execution, allowing NNPC to capitalize on market opportunities and sustain its competitiveness.

Furthermore, PPPs have significantly improved service quality and effectiveness within NNPC. Projects operated through PPPs have consistently shown higher service standards, improved customer satisfaction, and better adherence to performance benchmarks. The infusion of private sector practices has led to a market-oriented approach and a stronger focus on customer needs, enhancing NNPC's overall service delivery. However, the study also identifies some challenges and drawbacks in implementing PPPs within NNPC. Complex contractual negotiations, potential conflicts of interest, and the need for robust regulatory oversight were among the key challenges faced in PPP projects. Addressing these challenges is essential to ensure successful PPP partnerships and optimize their benefits.

In conclusion, the research confirms that Public Private Partnerships have been instrumental in enhancing the efficiency of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation. By strategically allocating resources, expediting project delivery, and improving service quality, PPPs have contributed to NNPC's overall operational effectiveness. Policymakers and stakeholders should recognize the value of PPPs in enhancing public institution efficiency and consider these partnerships as viable mechanisms to drive growth, innovation, and better service delivery in the broader public sector.

The study's findings offer valuable insights to guide future policy decisions and inform the implementation of PPPs in other public institutions. As the Nigerian government continues to explore ways to enhance public service delivery and optimize resource utilization, PPPs stand out as a promising avenue for driving efficiency and effectiveness in public institutions across various sectors. With careful planning, transparent governance, and a focus on mutual benefits, PPPs can be leveraged as transformative tools to achieve sustainable development and economic growth in Nigeria.

Based on the research findings and conclusions on the impact of Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) on the efficiency of the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) from 2015 to 2022, the following recommendations are proposed:

To enhance the efficiency and service delivery of public institutions in Nigeria, the government should actively promote Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) across various sectors. Through this, policymakers can attract private sector participation in strategic projects. Encouraging the adoption of PPPs beyond the Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) will help improve infrastructure, reduce public sector inefficiencies, and optimize resource utilization. Furthermore, comprehensive feasibility studies should be conducted before initiating PPP projects to assess their viability, minimize risks, and ensure long-term sustainability.

Strengthening regulatory oversight is essential for the success of PPP projects, as it helps mitigate potential conflicts of interest and governance issues. Implementing transparent guidelines, monitoring project progress, and enforcing compliance with performance indicators will enhance accountability. In addition, fostering long-term partnerships between public institutions and private entities is crucial for stability and success. Creating a supportive and mutually beneficial environment will encourage private sector commitment and investment, leading to more effective PPP outcomes.

Capacity building and knowledge transfer should be prioritized to ensure seamless collaboration between public and private partners. Investing in training programs and workshops will equip public institutions with the necessary expertise to manage PPP projects efficiently. Additionally, leveraging technological advancements can improve data management, project monitoring, and overall operational efficiency. Upgrading technological infrastructure in institutions like NNPC will facilitate the smooth implementation of PPP initiatives and enhance service delivery.

Regular performance evaluations and stakeholder engagement are critical to ensuring the effectiveness of PPP projects. Periodic assessments will provide valuable insights into areas of improvement, while knowledge-sharing platforms can facilitate the exchange of best practices among public institutions. Engaging citizens and civil society in PPP discussions will build public trust, increase transparency, and garner support for these initiatives. Lastly, continuous monitoring and adaptability are vital to keeping PPP projects aligned with evolving public needs and emerging opportunities, ensuring long-term success and sustainability.

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